

BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY – June 14, 2011

- **John Carman called the BRAC Implementation Committee to order at 7:35 p.m.**
- **Phil Alperson, the County's BRAC Coordinator, provided the following updates:**
 - George Milne of the Stone Ridge School was commended for arranging the use of Good Hall for this evening's meeting.
 - Phil reminded the Committee of the following schedule changes for July and August Committee meetings. The meetings will be held at the BCC Services Center:
 - The July meeting will be a week later than usual, on July 26 rather than July 19;
 - The August meeting will be a week later than usual, on August 23 rather than August 16.
 - **THE BRAC MOBILITY PROJECTS MATRIX IS POSTED ON THE BRAC WEB SITE.** It has been updated through June 14, 2011 and reflects the multi-modal approach the County, State and other stakeholders are taking to address the transportation impacts of BRAC in Bethesda – transit improvements, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, intersection upgrades, transportation demand management, etc.
 - http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo_project_matrix-051711.pdf
 - **THE “TIERS AND PHASES” OF BRAC PROJECTS** based on funding is also posted on the web site. The Tiers and Phases were developed by MDOT and MCDOT in November 2009 with input from the BIC.
 - **Matrix developed by MDOT-MCDOT, October 2009:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bracprojects-tiers-100609.pdf>
 - **Summary of Tiers & Phases, updated February 4, 2011:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/tiersphases-summary-revised-020411.pdf>
 - **FEDERAL FUNDING UPDATE:** Phil said there is no news on guidance from the Office of Economic Adjustment, but he has been told by OEA officials that “they are getting close” to making an announcement “in the near future.” On April 14,

President Obama signed into law the omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2011 that includes \$300 million for transportation infrastructure projects in communities with BRAC-impacted military medical facilities. The DoD Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) will administer these funds but has yet to determine a process by which qualified communities could apply for and receive funding. Phil is in frequent contact with OEA officials who are well aware of the urgency of the projects and expect to develop a process in the near future.

○ **CONSTRUCTION UPDATES:**

▪ **Consolidated Project Timeline for BRAC-related construction delays, as of May 4, 2011:**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/disruptions/timeline-041111.pdf>

- *REMINDER:* Cedar Lane Bridge over Rock Creek will be CLOSED from 7:00 pm June 16 through August 24.
- *NOTE:* SHA has altered the schedule of resurfacing projects, so that work on Old Georgetown Road will be completed before work begins on Wisconsin Avenue. ALSO NOTE there will be evening lane closures on Old Georgetown Road in downtown Bethesda this weekend, June 17-19, 2011.

▪ **SHA Construction Schedule for “Phase One” Intersection Improvements:**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersection-s-sha-tieroneschedule-122110.pdf>

- **Overnight Lane Closures this weekend (June 17-19) on Old Georgetown Road in downtown Bethesda:**

<http://www.roads.maryland.gov/pages/DistrictNews.aspx?did=d3>

- **WEB SITE UPDATES:** Phil reported that the County’s Public Information Office is converting data from the current web site to a new format, which is a time-consuming process. A new Home Page is being designed that is very easy to use and navigate. Greater emphasis will be placed on providing information the current status of transportation projects, which will become more useful when SHA work on the intersections proceeds in earnest this summer and when additional OEA funding for the intersections and Metro projects becomes available. Information on commuting alternatives will also be readily available.

- **There is a new Interactive Map of BRAC transportation projects on the Home Page:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/BRAC/index.asp>
 - **There is a new Interactive version of the Project Timeline on the “Projects At A Glance” Page, which will become the Traffic Update and Commuting Solutions Page:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects_glance.asp
 - **Bethesda Transportation Solutions BRAC web site: We Want You to be Ready!**
<http://www.bethesdatransit.org/BRAC.shtml>
- **NEWS ARTICLES OF INTEREST:** Phil noted that several relevant news articles which have been published over the last month have been posted on the web site’s Community Involvement Page, under the notes for today’s meeting. Many of these articles provide background on issues discussed at today’s BRAC Committee meeting:
 - <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/BRAC/community.asp> (scroll down to June 14, 2011)
- **MCDOT UPDATES:** Edgar Gonzalez provided an update of various MCDOT projects, and noted they should all be completed by September 2011.
 - Cedar Lane bridge over Rock Creek
 - West Cedar Lane shared use bike/pedestrian path
 - Jones Bridge Road shared use bike/pedestrian path
 - Battery Lane Resurfacing
 - MD 355 Multimodal Crossing Project at the Medical Center Metro station
 - Bethesda Lot 31 Building Construction;
 - Chevy Chase Valley Traffic Access mitigations:
 - Temporary signal on Jones Bridge Road at Spring Valley Road
 - Traffic Access restrictions in Chevy Chase Valley community
 - Battery Lane wayfinding
 - MD 355 Sidewalk (Navy side of road).
- **MCDOT’s Project Update, as of June 1, 2011:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-projectsupdate-060111.pdf>
- **6-3-11 MCDOT News Release: BRAC-related construction update: Cedar Lane Bridge, Battery Lane resurfacing, Jones Bridge Road sidewalk:**

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/dot/pressrelease/PR_details.asp?PrID=7647

- **6-7-11 County News Release: Cedar Lane Bridge to Close for Reconstruction for 12 Weeks; Route 34 Ride On Bus Service to be Detoured Project Will Improve Bike Network; Other Pedestrian Projects Under Way**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/News/press/PR_details.asp?PrID=7658
- **June 2011 MCDOT Newsletter on Cedar Lane project:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/cedarlanenewsletter-mcdot-june2011.pdf>
- **NIH UPDATE:** Phil Neuberg reported that, as promised last month, NIH has opened the South Drive gate at Old Georgetown Road for afternoon egress. This gate had been closed for on-campus construction. NIH is encouraging its personnel to use the South Drive gate as an alternative to exiting onto Rockville Pike.
- **NAVY UPDATE:** Captain Malanoski said he expected he would soon be able to report an increase in Defense Access Road funding for the MD 355 Metro Crossing project. Currently, DOD has committed \$20 million in DAR funds towards construction of the project. MCDOT has estimate that at least \$28 million was required to complete one of the two main components of the project, either a shallow pedestrian tunnel or high speed east-side elevators, and that the cost to construct the entire project – both components plus at-grade traffic operations and pedestrian safety enhancements – would cost approximately \$60 million.
- **PRESENTATION: NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY-BETHESDA REPORT ON PLANS FOR THE TRANSITION OF THE WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER TO BETHESDA**
 - Captain Malanoski gave a PowerPoint presentation on plans for transitioning WRAMC patients and personnel to Bethesda. Patients were divided into three groups: In-patients, Out-patients, and wounded, ill or injured. In-patient moves will be done swiftly – in one or two days – and will be coordinated with local authorities to ensure smooth movement of ambulances. Once they have been relocated, it is anticipated that the number of new in-patients in Bethesda should not contribute significantly to traffic. Approximately 400 wounded, ill and injured personnel currently at WRAMC will be split between Bethesda and Fort Belvoir. Once they have been relocated, it is anticipated that these additional patients should not contribute significantly to traffic in Bethesda. In-patient and wounded patient moves will take place later in the summer. Out-patients -- active and retired personnel – will constitute the largest number of patients transferring

from WRAMC to Bethesda and will contribute most significantly to increased patient traffic. These patients are already beginning to transition to Bethesda but the significant transition will occur later in the summer.

- There was some discussion of repost of a potential year-long delay on the implementation of BRAC in Bethesda. Captain Malanoski indicated that the Secretary of Defense is empowered to delay BRAC moves for a reasonably short period of time, perhaps weeks, if the facility is not deemed ready, but he said he was not aware of discussions for a long-term delay. SECDEF will conduct routine reviews of the operations of the new facilities in Bethesda early in the summer, prior to the patient moves scheduled to take place later in the summer.
- Construction at the Gates is ongoing. Improvements at the North Wood gate on Rockville Pike should be completed in July 2011. Construction at the South Wood gate and at the University Gate on Jones Bridge Road should be completed in August. Construction at the two remaining gates on Jones Bridge Road is expected in 2012.
- A new traffic light at North Wood gate should be installed by July, 2011 and at the University Gate by August. As was discussed at last month's BIC meeting, the signal will be fully functioning both the AM and PM peak hours. Edgar Gonzalez clarified that MCDOT operates the signals but that the signals are under the jurisdiction and authority of the State Highway Administration. Concerns have been raised that the PM signal might exacerbate gridlock on MD 355; SHA and MCDOT will monitor traffic conditions and SHA will be responsible for determining any changes to the use of the fully functioning.
- This presentation will be posted on the BRAC web site with this meeting summary when it becomes available.

- **ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:**

- **Captain Malanoski was asked about potential increased demand for housing by new personnel coming to Bethesda.** He said he did not anticipate a surge in housing demands in the near future, since most WRAMC personnel already live in the region. However, if traffic and commuting becomes difficult, some people may seek to relocate closer to the facility or to better commuting options if such housing is affordable.
- **George Milne observed that the community needs to be prepared for a long term closure of Cedar Lane adjacent to Rockville Pike when culvert relocation relating to the SHA intersections project takes place.** He urged transportation authorities to coordinate this work with Stone Ridge School, so that the closure could take place in the summer of 2013. George said he is aware that some Right of Way issues involving the Navy, NIH and SHA remain unresolved,

and feared this issue could delay the Intersections project and negatively impact Stone Ridge. Captain Malanoski said that meetings between the three agencies will be held in the very near future to (hopefully) resolve the outstanding issues.

- **Jeff Miller noted that the Navy is negotiating with a private bus service to provide express commuter service to the Medical Center from points in Central Maryland.** Navy is working with NIH to share this service; increased ridership will enable the company to provide greater service and participating personnel will qualify for transit subsidies, currently \$230 per month.
 - **It was noted that the Navy's BRAC construction hotline -- 301-319-BRAC (2722) -- is still functioning and is a good way to contact the Navy about any matters relating to BRAC.**
- **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
 - Karen Kuker-Kihl asked that printed copies of handouts be made available at the BIC meetings, rather than relying on attendees to print them off the BRAC web site.
 - **The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26, 2011 (rather than July 19), 7:30 p.m., at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

Committee members in attendance, June 14, 2011:

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator
John Carman, Chairman, BRAC Implementation Committee
Dawn Chaikin, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Larry Cole, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
Edgar Gonzalez, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Leslie Weber for Brian Gragnolati, Suburban Hospital
Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Association
Ginanne Italiano, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
Sara Morningstar, Montgomery County Office of Intergovernmental Relations
Patrick O'Neill, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
Richard Vogel and George Milne, Stone Ridge School
Phil Neuberg for Dan Wheeland, National Institutes of Health

Ex-officio:

Al Carr, House of Delegates
Ken Reichard (Senator Ben Cardin)
Joan Kleinman (Representative Chris Van Hollen)
Susan Buffone (Council Member Roger Berliner)

Debbie Spielberg (Council Member Marc Elrich)
Captain Michael Malanoski, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda
Jeff Miller, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

Other Attendees

Brigitte Akalovsky, North Chevy Chase
Kim Davis, Bethesda Patch
Sandy Dean, NNMC
Sarah Gantz, Gazette Newspapers
Greg Humes, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association
Sarah Jones, Coquelin Run Citizens Association / North Chevy Chase Elementary School
Alan Keoka, Joint Task Force - National Capital Medical
Karen Kuker-Kihl, The Promenade
Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont
Tom Robertson, Bethesda Urban Partnership
Al Roshdieh, Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation
Bill Sadlon, NAVFAC Washington
Ben Schneider, Navy
Peggy Schwartz, North Bethesda Transportation Management District
Paul Seder
Joyce Sperling, Coquelin Run Citizens Association
Robert Weesner, North Chevy Chase